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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6001
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBM/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST PRIORITY 1390
RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY 1107

UNCLAS VIENNA 000123

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STATE FOR EUR/ERA -- LABARGE AND EUR/AGS -- SAINT ANDRE

E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: AUSTRIA ON THE JANUARY 22-23 EU FOREIGN MINISTERS
MEETING (GAERC)

REF: A. STATE 5256

[1](#)B. STATE 5640

[1](#)1. (SBU) EconPolCouns delivered reftel demarches on general GAERC topics and on the external energy policy on January 19 to Austrian MFA European Correspondent Andreas Riecken.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Riecken made the following substantive comments:

-- Western Balkans/Kosovo: Riecken said Austria agrees that the U.S. and EU had to maintain a common stance in support of UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari's efforts. In addition to the points we raised, he noted that even after a UN Security Council resolution on Kosovo, there would be a need to ensure that the U.S. and EU supported a common interpretation of the text. He added that much would depend on the results of the Serbian elections on January 21. Kostunica could turn in several different ways to form a government, he noted. Serbian President Boris Tadic had recently told Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik that the "polls look good."

-- Western Balkans/Serbia, Montenegro: Council conclusions will circulate on Monday on the results of the Serbian elections, Riecken said, but there will otherwise be no discussion of Serbia. There will be a "technical" set of Council conclusions to apply the partnership agreement with Serbia-Montenegro to the newly independent Montenegro, he added.

-- Israeli-Palestinian Issues: The "Middle East Peace Process" will be a topic during the luncheon discussion, Riecken said. High Representative Javier Solana will probably report the results of his visit to the region.

-- Iran: This will be a topic in a "restricted session" involving Ambassadors and senior advisors, Riecken said. There is broad agreement on the need to ensure implementation of UNSCR 1737, although, Riecken said, there was a discussion underway as to what constituted "full" implementation. Riecken explained that some EU member states supported draft EU regulations that would stick to the letter of the admittedly vague language of the resolution, while others called for regulations that would interpret and expand on that language.

-- Somalia: There is a general feeling that the EU should support the African Union in mounting an operation in Somalia, Riecken said. One idea was to reprogram some 15 million Euros for this purpose. However, it was clear that this was insufficient -- in Sudan, AMIS had cost 240 million Euros. In addition, EU members had the view that funding should not be unconditional, but should instead have links to

reforms on the ground.

13. (SBU) Two other items were on the agenda, Riecken said:

-- Libya/Bulgarian Nurses: Bulgaria had requested a short discussion of this issue.

-- Death Penalty: Italy wanted to discuss ways in the UN context to promote a moratorium on the death penalty.
Kilner